

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Office of Current Intelligence
6 November 1962

CURRENT INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Soviet Efforts to Evade UN Verification of
Removal of Missiles from Cuba

1. Soviet statements and actions during the past several days strongly suggest that the USSR is making a major effort to load the missiles aboard Soviet ships and remove them from Cuba as quickly as possible before any UN verification and inspection machinery can be organized and put into effect. The Soviets clearly hope, in any event, to hold the UN operation to the absolute minimum. Moscow, in effect, is again attempting to confront the US with a fait accompli.

2. Soviet UN delegate Morozov told UN Secretariat officials on 5 November that dismantling of the missile sites will be completed and that all offensive weapons will have been shipped out of Cuba by 12 November. He said some Soviet ships are already in Cuban ports and that the others required to complete the removal will arrive this week. He argued that, in view of this schedule, there is no reason for continuing the Red Cross inspection system (which still has not been organized) beyond 15 November.

3. About half of the missile transporters and launching equipment previously identified at the MRBM sites now have appeared in Cuban ports. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] 9 of the 11 MRBM missile transporters at the port of Mariel have been loaded on the decks of Soviet ships in the harbor, and one of the ships is apparently leaving port. The USSR thus appears to be shipping missiles from Cuba without waiting for ships capable of carrying them below deck.

State Department review completed

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NGA Review
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4. When this process of removal has been completed, Khrushchev may well announce to the world that he has carried out his commitments to President Kennedy. He will then call on the President to respond by issuing a formal declaration guaranteeing Cuba against invasion by the US and other Western Hemisphere countries. The Soviet leaders would undoubtedly hope that these moves will effectively undercut US insistence on UN on-site inspection of the missile sites and weapons being removed by Soviet ships. They may believe that such a Soviet announcement, possibly accompanied by the publication of photographs purportedly establishing "proof" of Soviet performance, will deprive the issue of inspection and verification of its force and immediacy and that the US will then have no choice but to accept Soviet "good faith" in having made good on Khrushchev's commitments. The Soviet leaders probably would also believe these moves would put them in a strong position to charge the US with "bad faith" if the President should decline to give formal assurances against an invasion of Cuba on the ground that Khrushchev had failed to carry out his pledge to accept UN verification. Moscow's reply to this probably would be that the USSR had every intention of allowing full UN verification but that the adamant opposition of the "sovereign and independent" government of Cuba made it impossible to put these arrangements into operation.

5. In a further effort to "document" the USSR's good faith in implementing its pledges, Moscow may make public the alternative plan which Kuznetsov presented to Mr. McCloy on 4 November, under which the Soviets would provide the US with photographs of dismantled missiles sites, give the US the Soviet schedule for moving the missiles to Cuban ports, together with shipping schedules, and allow US ships to come alongside Soviet ships in such a way as to enable US inspectors to see and count the missiles. If the present New York negotiations fail to produce agreement on inspection and verification procedures, Moscow would claim that US insistence on full UN on-site verification in Cuba was only a device for delaying a settlement and evading implementation of the President's offer of assurances against an invasion of Cuba.

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6. It is not clear at this point whether there is collusion between the USSR and Cuba in rejecting full UN verification or whether the Soviets are simply taking advantage of Castro's opposition to avoid creating a precedent which would pose serious problems for the USSR in the future, particularly on questions of disarmament and nuclear test ban controls. It seems clear, however, that in view of President Kennedy's demand for UN verification, Khrushchev felt he had no choice but to accept this in his backdown letter of 28 October. [REDACTED]

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7. While the Soviet leaders thus apparently felt obliged at the height of the crisis to agree to UN verification in Cuba, they later came to believe that after Khrushchev's 28 October letter removed the immediate danger of US military action they could safely maneuver to extricate themselves from Khrushchev's embarrassing commitment by hiding behind Castro's opposition to any UN presence in Cuba.

8. A similar ambiguity surrounds the motives and pressures underlying the shift in the USSR's position on removing the IL-28's from Cuba. Prior to his arrival in Havana, Mikoyan assured Ambassador Stevenson and Mr. McCloy on 1 November that the IL-28's would be included in the list of offensive weapons to be withdrawn in an estimated 10 to 15 days. [REDACTED]

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Soviet representatives in Havana told U Thant's party "many times" that they were determined to remove all the equipment which President Kennedy regarded as offensive, including the IL-28's.

9. On 5 November, however, Kuznetsov professed surprise that the US regards these bombers as offensive weapons. He contended they are basically obsolete in view of their low ceiling and speed, that they are good for only "coastal defense," and that they cannot

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be used in combat over enemy territory. He gave a negative reply to a direct question whether the USSR would include the IL-28's in the weapons to be removed from Cuba.

10. In view of the very marginal strategic value to the USSR of deploying these bombers in Cuba, we believe this shift in the Soviet position may well be evidence of the serious difficulties Mikoyan is encountering in his talks with the Cuban leaders. Castro has made it clear that he was not consulted on Khrushchev's decision to withdraw the missiles and that, in any event, they were never under Cuban control. The IL-28's, however, may be an entirely different matter in that they may have been actually transferred to Cuban control under the terms of military assistance agreements. If this is the true state of affairs, it remains to be seen whether the USSR will risk jeopardizing its whole relationship with Castro by applying sufficient pressure to force him to consent to the removal of the bombers. Castro, in any event, is in a good position to use this question in demanding heavy compensation in the form of economic assistance and, possibly, further and more specific Soviet commitments to protect the Cuban regime in all contingencies.

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